



News Release

For Immediate Release:
Monday, February 23, 2009

Contact:
David Neville
Tobacco Prevention and Control Program
(o) 801-538-6917 (c) 801-386-1316

Former Smoker Tells of Losing Battle with Lung Cancer

SALT LAKE CITY— As part of its adult cessation efforts within the Hispanic community, the Utah Department of Health's (UDOH) Tobacco Prevention and Control Program (TPCP) recently launched a series of TV spots that focus on the serious physical and emotional impact of tobacco on users and their families.

The campaign features 59-year-old Gerardo Ozorio, a former smoker who quit in June 2008 after smoking for 46 years. Two months later, Ozorio was diagnosed with stage IV lung cancer. Gerardo passed away on January 1, 2009, shortly after recording the ads. He will never know the immense impact his story will have on the Hispanic community.

"Gerardo's story puts a face on tobacco-related diseases and their tangible negative effects," said David Neville, TPCP media coordinator. "The ads are incredibly powerful – we hope the Ozorio family's story will motivate tobacco users to quit for good."

Gerardo, his wife Adolfina, and sons Gustavo and Ramón were all interviewed for the campaign. The message is that tobacco addiction impacts not only the smoker but everyone else around them, especially loved ones. As stated by Gustavo, "...nothing can prepare you in life to see your father sick this way. Nothing prepares you in life for something as horrible as cancer."

"We're very grateful to the Ozorio family – especially Gerardo – for sharing their story in hopes it will encourage others to quit," Neville said.

The TRUTH campaign is part of Utah's comprehensive and proven approach to reducing the health and financial burdens tobacco use has on communities. The TRUTH and its

-MORE-

partners provide programs to: prevent youth from starting to use tobacco; help tobacco users quit; protect Utahns from secondhand smoke; and eliminate tobacco-related disparities.

To view the ads, visit <http://wediditstory.com/videopage/spanish.php>.

For help quitting, call the Hispanic Tobacco Quit Line at 1-877-629-1585 or visit www.utahquitnet.com

#

The mission of the Utah Department of Health is to protect the public's health through preventing avoidable illness, injury, disability and premature death; assuring access to affordable, quality health care; and promoting healthy lifestyles.